APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/608,002	06/30/2003	Mikio Sasaki	11-168	8200

23400   7590   05/11/2009

POSZ LAW GROUP, PLC
12040 SOUTH LAKES DRIVE
SUITE 101
RESTON, VA 20191

EXAMINER
WOZNIAK, JAMES S

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2626	

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
05/11/2009	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

	Application No.	Applicant(s)
Office Action Summary	10/608,002	SASAKI ET AL.
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	JAMES S. WOZNIAK	2626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3</u> MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on <u>23 January 2009</u>.

2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**.   2b) ☐ This action is non-final.

3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) ☒ Claim(s) <u>73-94</u> is/are pending in the application.

    4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) ☒ Claim(s) <u>73-92 and 94</u> is/are rejected.

7) ☒ Claim(s) <u>93</u> is/are objected to.

8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on <u>05 October 2007</u> is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.

    Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

    Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

    a) ☒ All   b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:

      1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

      2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

      3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

    * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____.

4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
    Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Amendment

1.   In response to the office action from 8/28/2008, the applicant has submitted an

amendment, filed 1/23/2009, amending independent claims 73, 82, and 83, while arguing to

traverse the art rejection based on the limitations regarding claimed selection/output of a system

response when a user's response breaks a word chain game rule *(Amendment, Pages 12-13)*.

Applicant's arguments have been fully considered, however the previous rejection is maintained

due to the reasons listed below in the response to arguments.

2.   The applicants have not addressed the previous claim objection directed towards claim 77

(see Office Action from 8/28/2008, Page 4), thus this objection is maintained. The applicants

have canceled the objectionable claim language of claim 80, but added similar objectionable

claim language associated with the selecting unit. Thus, this objection also appears to be

unaddressed. Therefore, the objection with respect to claim 80 has been maintained and updated

to address the amendments.

3.   The applicant has amended claim 82 and argues that this claim, as amended, overcomes

the previous 35 U.S.C. 101 rejection. While the amended claim does link the computer program

to a computer system processor to enable practical application functionality of the program steps

and overcome the previous 35 U.S.C. 101 rejection, the claim introduces the terminology

"computer program product" and "having a computer readable program code". The first

preambular limitation raises the issue of new matter. The applicant points to Paragraph 0179 of

the P.G. Publication, which corresponds to Page 39 of the specification, in support of these

limitations *(Amendment, Page 11)*. It is noted, however, that this portion and the remainder of

the specification is silent on the term "computer program product". Thus, what is meant by this

term and what it encompasses is not supported in the specification as filed and claim 82 is

directed to new matter. The second preambular limitation raises an objection because it is

uncertain whether the computer readable memory actually stores or is encoded with the program

since it is only noted as having it. Therefore, although the previous 35 U.S.C. 101 rejection has

been overcome, the amended claims have raised additional issues. It is recommended that the

claim be amended to indicate --A computer readable memory medium storing a computer

program that is executed by a computer system to implement...-- in order to overcome both of

these issues.

4.   In response to amended claim 86 and the arguments associated therewith *(Amendment,*

Page 11), the examiner has withdrawn the previous 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph rejection

directed towards new matter.

Response to Arguments

5.   The applicant has amended claim 73 and 82-83 to clarify that the user error is not merely

a recognition error in response to which a system still continues a dialog *(as is taught by*

Ishibashi (JP 06269534) (Pages 5-6). This claim now indicates that the user's error is actually the result of breaking a game rule of a word chain game wherein initial letter(s) of the user's word are required to match the last letters of the computer's previous response and that the system still continues a game dialog if a user breaks this rule by speaking a non-compliant word. The applicants argue that these added limitations are not found in Ishibashi because Ishibashi always ends the word chain game when a user breaks these rules *(Amendment, Pages 12-13).* While the examiner agrees that Ishibashi fails to teach the system overlooking this type of rule breaking input, these arguments are moot with respect to the new grounds of rejection, necessitated by the amended claims and further in view of Patinkin et al *(WO 01/91466 A2).*

With respect to dependent claim 80, the applicants argue that Ishibashi fails to teach the rule regarding when a system repeats a word that has already been used in the word chain game, the breaking of which allows the user to win because the applicants allege that Ishibashi never allows a user to win and always provides the correct answer *(Amendment, Pages 13-14).* In response, the examiner notes that Ishibashi teaches a general game termination response when either an input word or an *output* word is repeated in a game *(Page 6, Paragraph 0008).* In other words the user can lose a game when they repeat their input word, but a system can also lose the game when it repeats its output word. Fig. 2, Element 13, also specifically notes that a user can win a game. Thus, Ishibashi explicitly and implicitly *(i.e., it is unclear why a user would play a game that they cannot win)* teaches the aforementioned claim limitation.

With respect to new dependent claim 93, the applicants argue that the prior art fails to teach that a word for continuing a word chain game after a user has uttered a rule-breaking utterance is selected based on an impression of a user determined based on a previous step in the

interactive game dialog *(Amendment, Pages 14-15)*. The examiner notes that although Patinkin

et al does teach continuing a game after a user enters a rule breaking input *(see below rejection)*

and Miyasato *(JP2001-190930)* teaches the selection of user difficulty levels. The examiner

agrees that none of the prior art of record, either individually or taken in combination, teaches

that a computer shiritori game system selects the continuing word after a user's rule-breaking

input based on a impression of a user determined based on a previous game dialog step. Thus,

this claim has been indicated as containing allowable subject matter *(see below "Allowable*

Subject Matter").

The applicants argue that Ishibashi fails to teach new dependent claim 94 *(Amendment,*

Pages 15-16). The examiner notes that this feature is taught by Kurita *(JP2000-61137) (see*

below rejection).

The art rejections of the remainder of the dependent claims are specifically traversed for

reasons similar to their associated independent claims *(Amendment, Page 16)*. In regards to such

arguments, see the response directed towards the independent claims.

Claim Objections

6.   **Claim 80** is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claims 80 recites various steps/elements "configured to" perform certain functions. It is

not certain whether these functions are part of the claim because they are not positively recited

only "configured to" perform them. These functions will be considered as being actively

performed for the application of the prior art of record.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

7.   The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

> The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making
> and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it
> pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode
> contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

8.   **Claim 82** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the

written description requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described

in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that

the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

Claim 82 recites the terminology "computer program product". This preambular limitation raises

the issue of new matter because the specification is silent on the term "computer program

product" *(see Specification, Page 39)*. Thus, what is meant by this term and what it encompasses

is not supported in the specification as filed and claim 82 is directed to new matter. It is

recommended that the claim be amended to indicate --A computer readable memory medium

storing a computer program that is executed by a computer system to implement...-- in order to

overcome this issue.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

9.   The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all

obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in
> section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are
> such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person
> having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the
> manner in which the invention was made.

10.   **Claims 73, 80-83, and 90** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over

Ishibashi *(USPTO translation of JP 06269534 from 2/2007)* in view of Patinkin et al *(WO*

01/91466 A2).

With respect to **Claim 73**, Ishibashi discloses:

A data base that stores a dictionary containing a plurality of words and a plurality of

phrases *(speech recognizer word vocabulary, Pages 5-6)*;

A recognition unit that recognizes a user's input representing what the user says in

response to previous output by the computer system in a currently running interactive dialog and

understands what the user says by referring to the dictionary stored in the data base *(speech*

recognizer that is capable of recognizing words from a game vocabulary stored in a memory

during an ongoing game dialog, Pages 5-6);

A determining unit that determines whether a user error occurs in the user's input, the

user error representing that the user's input includes a word or phrase that does not meet a

predetermined rule in response to the previous output by the computer system, the predetermined

rule being defined for a word chain game, the predetermined rule comprising: that the user and

the computer system alternate to output a word or phrase which has an initial letter or letters

identical with the final letter or letters of the immediately previous output word *(control unit that compares the end of a system word to a beginning of a user word and vice versa to determine shiritori game rules are being properly followed, Pages 5-6; and Fig. 2)*;

A selection unit that selects a phrase to be used to continue the interactive dialog upon a determination that the user's input has undergone a recognition error *(phrase selected by a control unit portion that instructs the user to proceed after an incorrect entry, Pages 5-6)*;and

An output unit that outputs the selected phrase or word to the user so as to answer to the user's input *(voice synthesizer for providing a voice instructions to a user, Pages 5-6, Paragraphs 0007-0009)*.

Although Ishibashi discloses a shiritori game system employing a speech recognition and a means for continuing a dialog even if an error has occurred with respect to recognition, Ishibashi does not explicitly teach that a word is selected by the system to continue game dialog if a user's word is determined to break a word chain game rule which states that the beginning letter(s) of a user's word must match the ending letter(s) of the spoken output previously output by the computer system. Patinkin, however, recites that even if a user's game response word is incorrect, an interactive game can continue *(Page 31, Lines 20-28; and Figs. 4A and 4C)*.

Ishibashi and Patinkin are analogous art because they are from a similar field of endeavor in word based game systems. Thus, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to modify the teachings of Ishibashi with the error tolerance taught by Patinkin in order to generate means that can tolerate user errors *(Patinkin, Page 31, Lines 27-28)* to better accommodate an electronic shiritori game user *(Ishibashi, Page 4, Paragraph 0003)*.

With respect to **Claim 80**, Ishibashi further discloses:

The computer system is configured to execute a word chain game which is played between a user and the computer system *(shiritori game, Pages 5-6, Paragraphs 0007-0009)* having a data base that stores a dictionary containing a plurality of words*(speech recognizer word vocabulary, Pages 5-6)*, the word chain game being a word-interchanging game in which iterative steps will be repeated until a loser is determined based on a judgment that either the user or the computer system is the .first to breaks any rule of the word chain game *(rule compliance utilized for determining the game winner, Page 6)*, wherein the rules comprise:

that game players alternatively output a word which has an initial letter or letters identical with the final letter or letters of the immediately previous output word *(beginning of the user/system word should be the same as the other participants' word ending, Pages 5-6)*,

The output word has not been used since the beginning of the word chain game *(words cannot be repeated, Page 6)*, and the output word does not end with any particular predetermined letters *(word ending in "n" terminates the game, Page 6)*, while Patinkin teaches that a user's incorrect input is ignored, as applied to Claim 73.

With respect to **Claim 81**, Ishibashi further discloses:

the data base of the computer system further stores a plurality of series words which are chained in accordance with the rules of a word chain game *(vocabulary words that are chained together according to the shiritori game rules, Pages 5-6, Paragraphs 0006-0007)*, and

The selection unit selects the word to output to the user by referring to the plurality of series of words stored in the data base in order not to terminate the word chain, game due to a

difficulty for searching a next word *(words used by a voice synthesizer to continue a game dialog*

that follow the rules of the shiritori game, Pages 5-6, Paragraphs 0007-0008).

Claim 82 contains subject matter similar in scope to claim 73, and thus, is rejected under

similar rationale. Ishibashi also teaches system process implementation using a program stored

in a system processor memory *(Pages 6-7).*

Claim 83 contains subject matter similar in scope to claim 73, and thus, is rejected under

similar rationale.

Claim 90 contains subject matter similar in scope to claim 73, and thus, is rejected under

similar rationale. Also Ishibashi further teaches the following game rules:

a word chain game which is played between a user and the computer system *(shiritori*

game, Pages 5-6, Paragraphs 0007-0009) having a data base that stores a dictionary containing a

plurality of words*(speech recognizer word vocabulary, Pages 5-6)*, the word chain game being a

word-interchanging game in which iterative steps will be repeated until a loser is determined

based on a judgment that either the user or the computer system is the .first to breaks any rule of

the word chain game *(rule compliance utilized for determining the game winner, Page 6)*,

wherein the rules comprise:

The output word has not been used since the beginning of each interactive dialog

including the currently running interactive dialog for the word chain game *(words cannot be*

repeated, Page 6), and the output word does not end with any particular predetermined letters

(word ending in "n" terminates the game, Page 6).

Additionally Ishibashi discloses:

Recognizing a user's input *(speech recognition, Page 5)*;

Determining that the user's input is allowed in respect to the rules of the word chain game

(determining that the user input complies with the game rules, Pages 5-6);

Selecting a wrong word in respect to the rules of the word chain game, the wrong word

leading to termination of the word chain game due to breaking of one of the rules by the

computer system *(system selected output breaks the game rules such as a repeated output word,*

Page 6); and

Outputting an incorrect word to result in a user's win in the word chain game *(system*

word is output using a synthesizer and speaker, Pages 5-6; and Fig. 2).

11.   **Claims 74, 84-89, and 91-92** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable

over Ishibashi in view of Patinkin et al and further in view of Miyasato *(USTPO Translation of*

JP2001-190830 from 7/2008).

With respect to **Claim 74**, Ishibashi in view of Patinkin discloses the speech-enabled

dialog system as applied to Claim 73. Ishibashi in view of Patinkin does not specifically suggest

a learning unit that learns a new word when it is not found in the dictionary and updates the word

in a dictionary as is set forth in claim 74. Miyasato, however, provides a learning means that

identifies a spoken input that cannot be found in a memory database and asks/prompts the user to

teach the word to the system before registering it in memory *(Paragraphs 0016 and 0052)*.

Ishibashi, Patinkin, and Miyasato are analogous art because they are from a similar field

of endeavor in word games. Thus, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the

art, at the time of invention, to modify the teachings of Ishibashi in view of Patinkin with the

learning means taught by Miyasato to expand game usability by enabling subsequent word

games to incorporate new words *(Miyasato, Paragraph 0016)*.

Claim 84 contains subject matter similar in scope to claim 74, and thus, is rejected under

similar rationale.

With respect to **Claim 85**, Ishibashi further discloses:

Determining that the interactive dialog is to be continued when the computer system

finds that the user's input includes a word or a phrase indicating that the user made an occurrence

of an error in inputting the user's input into the computer system *(user makes an error and the*

dialog is allowed to continue, Page 5).

With respect to **Claim 86**, Miyasato further teaches that a user difficulty level of words

ties into determining if a continuing dialog can be found *(Paragraphs 0032-33; and 0057-58)*.

With respect to **Claim 87**, Ishibashi further discloses:

Selecting a wrong word to break a consistency of the interactive dialog so as to

discontinue the interactive dialog *(the word output by a system has already been used, which*

terminates the dialog, Page 6).

Claim 88 contains subject matter similar in scope to claim 74, and thus, is rejected under

similar rationale.

With respect to **Claim 89**, Ishibashi further discloses:

Determining that the interactive dialog with the user is to be continued based on a result

of an evaluated consistency of the interactive dialog with the user, wherein even if the user's

input includes a word or a phrase that indicates that the user made an occurrence of the error in

inputting the user's input to the computer system *(it is determined that the dialog should be continued even though the user has made an input error, Page 5)*.

Claim 91 contains subject matter similar in scope to claim 74, and thus, is rejected under similar rationale.

With respect to **Claim 92**, Ishibashi further discloses:

the data base of the computer system further stores a plurality of series words which are chained in accordance with the rules of a word chain game *(vocabulary words that are chained together according to the shiritori game rules, Pages 5-6, Paragraphs 0006-0007)*, and

The selection unit selects the word to output to the user by referring to the plurality of series of words stored in the data base in order not to terminate the word chain, game due to a difficulty for searching a next word *(words used by a voice synthesizer to continue a game dialog that follow the rules of the shiritori game, Pages 5-6, Paragraphs 0007-0008)*.

12.   **Claims 75-79** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishibashi in view of Patinkin et al in view of Miyasato and further in view of Kurita *(USPTO Translation of JP2000-61137 from 7/2008)*.

With respect to **Claim 75**, Ishibashi in view of Patinkin and further in view of Miyasato discloses the speech-enabled dialog system utilizing a learning unit, as applied to Claim 74. Ishibashi in view of Patinkin in view of Miyasato does not specifically suggest a scenario interpreter, however, Kurita discloses:

A scenario interpreter that controls a flow of the interactive dialog based on a history of the user's inputs such that topics of the interactive dialog are directed to preferences of the user

(word chain game interpreter is based upon past user inputs into a memory to utilize preferred genres in the game, Paragraph 0033, 0035)

Wherein the selection unit selects words to output to the user, based on the current topics of the interactive dialog *(words directed to the current genre, Paragraphs 0033; and 0035)*, to ensure that the interactive dialog is to be continued even when the Computer system fails to recognize the user's input *(system cannot recognize speech and still continues genre dialog, Paragraph 0018)* and finds that the user's input indicates that the user made the occurrence of the error in response to the computer system's previous output to the user *(taught by Ishibashi as applied to Claim 73)*.

Ishibashi, Patinkin, Miyasato, and Kurita are analogous art because they are from a similar field of endeavor in word games. Thus, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of invention, to modify the teachings of Ishibashi with the genre scenario means taught by Kurita in order to allow a user to better enjoy a Japanese word-chain game *(Kurita, Paragraph 0036)*.

With respect to **Claim 76**, Kurita further discloses:

An anticipating unit that anticipates a future response from the user if the word selected by the computer system be received and responded by the user *(system processing means that anticipates a user response within a certain genre, Paragraph 0035)*.

With respect to **Claim 77**, Miyasato further discloses:

A dialog management unit that stores the user's attributes, wherein the selection unit selects the words and the phrase for answering to the user's input to those which have a degree of difficulty within a range of degrees of difficulty set up in accordance with the user's attributes

(difficulty levels corresponding to dictionary data that is based upon different user profiles,

Paragraphs 0026-0028; and Figure 2).

With respect to **Claim 78**, Miyasato further discloses:

A timer that counts an elapsed time after the output unit outputs the selected, word

selected by the selection unit to the user *(timer, Paragraph 0056; and Fig. 1, Element 36),*

wherein the determining unit evaluates the degree of a user's satisfaction with a currently

proceeding dialog between the user and the computer system taking into account the elapsed

time counted by the timer *(timer setting is adjusted based on user difficulties, Paragraph 0013).*

With respect to **Claim 79**, Ishibashi further discloses:

A counter that counts a number of occurrences of an error by the computer to the word

outputted by the user *(means for monitoring a breaking of rules by a user or computer system,*

Paragraph 0008),

Wherein, the selecting unit selects a wrong word that breaks the rule of the word chain,

game such that the user is a winner of a word chain game, if the number of occurrences of an

error by the computer becomes greater than a predetermined number *(repeated output word is*

issued from a speaker when a system selects the one repeated word so that the user wins the

game, Paragraph 0008).

13.   **Claim 94** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ishibashi in view

of Patinkin et al and further in view of Kurita *(USPTO Translation of JP2000-61137 from*

7/2008).

With respect to **Claim 94**, Ishibashi in view of Patinkin discloses the speech-enabled

shiritori dialog system that continues a dialog when a user has broken a shiritori game rule, as

applied to Claim 73. Although Ishibashi in view of Patinkin teaches continuing a shiritori

dialog, these prior art references do not specifically suggest deciding upon an speech output

based on a previous analyzed time, however, Kurita analyzes a user's response time with respect

to a time limit threshold to determine a next voice output in response to an inattentive or

unenthusiastic user *(Paragraphs 0035 and 0051; and Fig. 3, Elements 230-240).*

Ishibashi, Patinkin, and Kurita are analogous art because they are from a similar field of

endeavor in word games. Thus, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the

art, at the time of invention, to modify the teachings of Ishibashi with the time analysis means

taught by Kurita in order to allow a user to better enjoy a Japanese word-chain game *(Kurita,*

Paragraph 0036).

Allowable Subject Matter

14.   **Claim 93** is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be

allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and

any intervening claims.

15.   The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

With respect to **Claim 93**, the prior art of record fails to explicitly teach or fairly suggest,

either individually or taken in combination, a shiritori word chain game system utilizing a speech

recognizer and featuring a means for allowing a system to generate a spoken word or phrase

output that continues the game in response to determining that a user has spoken an utterance

which breaks a shiritori game rule *(i.e., the first letter(s) of the user's spoken word do not match*

the last letter(s) of the computer's previous voice output), wherein the word for continuing a

word chain game after a user has uttered a rule-breaking utterance is selected based on an

impression of a user determined based on a previous step in the interactive game dialog. The

examiner notes that although Patinkin et al does teach continuing a game after a user enters a

rule breaking input *(Page 31, Lines 20-28; and Figs. 4A and 4C)* and Miyasato *(JP2001-190930)*

teaches the selection of user difficulty levels *(Page 18)*, none of the prior art of record, either

individually or taken in combination, teaches that a computer shiritori game system selects the

continuing word after a user's rule-breaking input based on a impression of a user determined

based on a previous game dialog step. Thus, claim 93 contains allowable subject matter.

Conclusion

16.   Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this

Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a).

Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE

MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO

MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after

the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period

will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37

CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event,

however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this

final action.

17.   Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the

examiner should be directed to James S. Wozniak whose telephone number is (571) 272-7632.

The examiner can normally be reached on M-Th, 7:30-5:00, F, 7:30-4, Off Alternate Fridays.

        If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's

supervisor, Richemond Dorvil can be reached at (571) 272-7602. The fax phone number for the

organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

        Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent

Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications

may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished

applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR

system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR

system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/James S. Wozniak/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2626